

Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc.
3125 Myers Street, P.O. Box 7638
Riverside, California 92513-7638
(909) 351-3500

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FLEETWOOD

December 2, 1999

DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
SS/RVPC 00-49

Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Reference: Safety Recall Campaign 99V-294

To Whom it May Concern:

Mailing of the attached dealer letter and service bulletin was conducted on November 19, 1999. Mailing of the attached customer letter will be conducted on December 17, 1999.

The status of this recall campaign will be included in our report for the quarter ending December 31, 1999. Therefore, the first quarterly report will be due to NHTSA by January 31, 2000.

If you have any questions regarding these letters, please contact me at 909-351-3646.

Sincerely,



Shelley Smith
RV Product Compliance

cc: Bob Wozniak - Director of Product Compliance, RV Group
Craig Biazio - Service Administrator, RV Towable Group

Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc.
Travel Trailer Division Consumer Affairs
3030 Myers Street, P.O. Box 7638
Riverside, California 92513-7638
(800) 445-3307
(909) 353-7040 FAX

Travel Trailers • Fifth Wheels • Truck Campers • Park Trailers

FLEETWOOD

IMPORTANT RECALL INFORMATION

November 19, 1999

**TO: ALL FLEETWOOD DEALER PRINCIPALS,
SERVICE MANAGERS, PARTS MANAGERS**

**SUBJECT: RECALL CAMPAIGN - 91112
(1997 AND 1998 Avion/Westport Upper Chassis - Pin Box Recall)**

Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc., is requesting your assistance in conducting a voluntary recall notification campaign in accordance with the National Highway Safety Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc., has determined that a defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists in all 1997 and certain 1998 Avion and Westport fifth wheel travel trailers, manufactured at our Omaha, Nebraska, manufacturing plant. We have determined that a safety defect exists in these fifth wheel trailers and are notifying owners in order to correct the problem. A copy of the letter sent to owners is enclosed for your information.

What is the problem? The subject fifth wheel trailers can experience excessive flexing and/or tearing of the upper chassis structure that supports and secures the pinbox to the chassis.

What should you do? Owners of the above mentioned fifth wheel trailers have been asked to contact Fleetwood's Consumer Affairs Department for the name of the nearest authorized Fleetwood dealer to have the described defective condition remedied. In the event that you are contacted by a customer, please verify eligibility by referring to the serial number range listed on the following page and contact the Fleetwood Consumer Affairs Department at (800) 445-3307 for further instructions. Any Fleetwood repair orders submitted for payment without "Prior Authorization" will be denied and returned accordingly.

Should you perform this service, please complete the Fleetwood Repair Order (form X-SR-042). Once repairs are completed, have the customer sign the Fleetwood Repair Order and return it to us. The repair order should be submitted to our Omaha, Nebraska, Service Facility for payment. You will be paid a fee in accordance with Service Bulletin #91112. Customers will not be charged for these repairs. If you have one of these vehicles in your inventory, you will be

***What
should
you do?
(cont)***

mailed a recall notice for that specific fifth wheel trailer involved in this recall. Fleetwood is asking our dealers to repair stock units on dealer lots. Once again, contact the Fleetwood Consumer Affairs Department at (800) 445-3307 for a "Prior Authorization" number. If you need repair assistance prior to starting the recall repairs, please contact our Technical Assistance Group at (800) 619-8454.

Federal Law (Section 154 of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicles Safety Act of 1966) requires that:

If you have received a notice of recall or failure to comply from Fleetwood or any component manufacturer, you must repair or otherwise correct the defects on vehicles remaining in your inventory, according to the notification, before selling or leasing the vehicles.

1. Identification of Involved Vehicles

All 1997 Avion & Westport fifth wheels	Certain 1998 Avion & Westport fifth wheels
1EM5W3624V9312785-1EE5W3720V9313681	1EE5W3720W9313682-1EEC3326W9314385

2. Repair Procedure

If you are asked to perform this repair procedure, you will be faxed a copy of Recall Service Bulletin #91112 which describes the nature of the needed repair(s). Please make certain the recall is performed according to the instructions.

3. Parts Ordering

Contact the Parts Department at Omaha, Nebraska Service Center to place your parts order. Please refer to the Fleetwood service part number(s) contained on the Recall Bulletin #91112.

4. Flat Rate Allowance

The flat rate code to be used for this Safety Recall is as follows:

<i>Flat Rate Code</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Flat Rate Time</i>
9068-11-9068-17	Upper Chassis Reinforcement	20.0 Hrs.
9069-11-9069-17	Upper Chassis Support Replacement	35.0 Hrs.

Please review this letter with your Parts and Service Staff to familiarize them with this Voluntary Safety Recall Campaign.

Thank you for helping Fleetwood with its continuing efforts to maintain customer satisfaction.

Sincerely,

FLEETWOOD ENTERPRISES, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Biazio".

**Craig Biazio
Service Administrator
RV Towable Group**

Enclosures

IMPORTANT RECALL INFORMATION

December 17, 1999

Dear Valued Fleetwood Fifth Wheel Customer:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Highway Traffic and Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc., has determined that a defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists in all 1997 and certain 1998 Avion and Westport fifth wheels built at our Omaha, Nebraska, manufacturing facility.

***What is
the
problem?***

The subject fifth wheel trailers can experience excessive flexing in the upper chassis which can lead to failure in the area of the pinbox. This can lead to a loss of vehicle control and result in personal injury and/or a vehicle accident.

***What will
Fleetwood
do?***

The repair for this potential problem consists of reinforcing or replacing the pinbox and its support structure at no charge to you. This should require minimal time and result in little inconvenience to you. Please rest assured that this repair will be performed only by an authorized, experienced repair facility.

***What
should
you do?***

Since this defect affects motor vehicle safety, it is recommended that you immediately have your fifth wheel trailer repaired by contacting Fleetwood Consumer Affairs Department at (800) 445-3307. An associate will assist you in making an appointment to have this repair performed by an authorized Fleetwood Dealer or Fleetwood Service Facility. Repairs should take no longer than 35.0 hours.

If it is necessary for you to tow your fifth wheel trailer, be aware of any changes in the angle of the pinbox. The pin should be vertical and the plate around it should be horizontal when the trailer is level. In cases where the upper chassis has been damaged, the following warning signs can be seen:

1. An increase in relative up and down motion between the pinbox and the surrounding structure. A small amount of movement is normal.
2. The pinbox pushing into and damaging (cracking) the lower front fiberglass cap. A small amount of flaking is normal.

***What
should
you do?
(cont)***

Fleetwood believes that unless these warning signs are seen, your fifth wheel trailer should be safe to tow until the repair is made. If you observe other unusual changes in this area or feel that there is damage that cannot be seen, stop towing and contact your dealer or Fleetwood Consumer Affairs Department at (800) 445-3307 for immediate assistance.

When you deliver your fifth wheel for repairs, your dealer will complete a Fleetwood Repair Order. Upon completion of the repair, please sign the Fleetwood Repair Order and ask your dealer to return it to us.

If you no longer own this vehicle, please notify Fleetwood by calling our Consumer Affairs Department at (800) 445-3307, stating the name, address, and telephone number of the person or party you sold it to. This will enable us to send this important recall information to the new owner.

If you are unable to obtain the specified repair promptly and without charge, please contact:

Fleetwood RV Towable Group
Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc.
PO Box 7638
Riverside, CA 92513-7638
(800) 445-3307

If you believe that the dealer and Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc., have failed or have been unable to remedy the defect without charge or within a reasonable period of time, you may submit a complaint to:

*Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street SW
Washington D.C. 20590*

or call the toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at (800) 424-9393. Residents of Washington D.C. area should call (202) 366-0123.

While this letter does not constitute an acknowledgment of legal liability, Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc., regrets any inconvenience this situation may cause you. We are taking these steps in the interest of your safety. We appreciate your prompt assistance in eliminating this potential hazard.

Sincerely,

FLEETWOOD ENTERPRISES, INC.



Craig Biazio
Service Administrator
RV Towable Group

RECALL SERVICE BULLETIN

#91112

**1997 and 1998 Avion and Westport Fifth-wheel Trailers built by
Fleetwood Travel Trailers of Nebraska, Inc.**

Upper Chassis Repair

This Recall Service Bulletin describes the procedure to inspect, reinforce and if required, repair the pin box area of all 1997 and certain 1998 Avion and Westport fifth-wheel trailers.

PLEASE READ THROUGH ALL STEPS BEFORE PROCEEDING.

Parts Required

244382
245908

Reinforcing/Repairing Upper Chassis

Support, 7-ga. formed steel

Parts kit

This kit contains:

2	246582	3 ³ / ₁₆ " X 5" 7-ga. steel plates
25	054072	#10 X 1 ⁵ / ₈ " TEK screws
25	245571	1/4-20 X 2 ³ / ₄ " TEK screws
25	084172	3/16" rivet, countersunk, arctic white
2	138218	Sealant, acrylic latex, white, tube
1	203238	Sealant, Sika 221, white
1	138261	Sealant, Alpha self-leveling #1015, white

Replacing Crossmembers and PinBox

244383
245909

Upper chassis assembly, 97/98 Westport/Avion

Parts kit

This kit contains:

25	054072	#10 X 1 ⁵ / ₈ " TEK screws
25	245571	1/4-20 X 2 ³ / ₄ " TEK screws
25	084172	3/16" rivet, countersunk, arctic white
2	138218	Sealant, acrylic latex, white, tube
1	203238	Sealant, Sika 221, white
1	138261	Sealant, Alpha self-leveling #1015, white

Locally purchased materials: 23" X 95-1/2" X 2.7mm luan panel

1 1/2" X 1 1/2" pine as required

White wood glue

Senco 3/16" X 5/8" crown D10 BABPN or equivalent

Tools Required

Rivet Gun

Drill motor

Sealant applicator gun

Finish stapler

Welder, MIG (gas-shielded wire fed) welding

machine, 200-amp minimum, .035 diameter wire,

AWS E7-S-3 or E7-OS-6

Description of the repairs required

The repair involves the following procedures:

1. Exposure and inspection of the upper chassis members for cracking.
2. Reinforcement of the upper chassis area to prevent future cracking, or; replacement of the upper chassis center section, including the pin box, if inspection reveals cracking beyond specified limits.
4. Reinstallation of front cap and moldings.

PART 1 — Exposure and Inspection of Upper Chassis

NOTE: Be sure vehicle is on a level surface before proceeding.

1. Empty front wardrobe.
2. Drill out front molding rivets with #5 or $\frac{13}{16}$ " drill bit. Remove the rivets and pull down the lower front cap for access.
3. Empty front closet. Remove lower shelf. Remove front lower wall section.
4. See Figure 1. Remove and discard the 2 X 4 as shown. Reinforce the front by adding $1\frac{1}{2}$ " X $1\frac{1}{2}$ " framing. Fasten with white wood glue and finish staples. See Figure 2. Set aside for reinstallation in a later step.

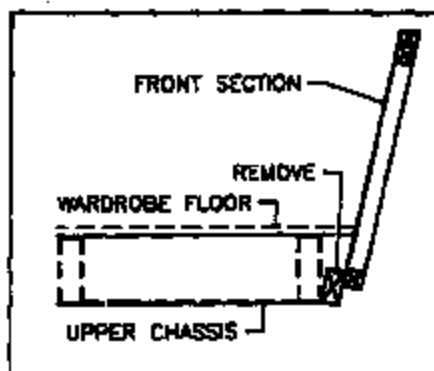


Figure 1

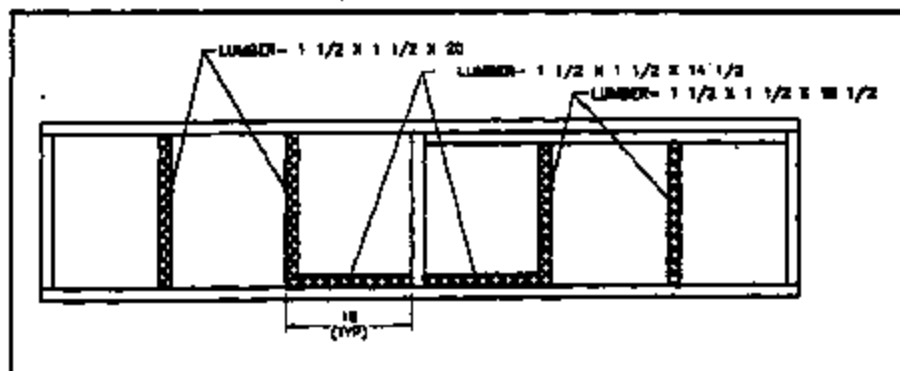


Figure 2

5. Remove sliding doors and lower rail. Pull up carpet and remove screws holding wardrobe floor. Remove wardrobe floor.
6. Inspect tubing and connections in pinbox area. Note and write down any cracks or buckling. The maximum for any cracking for this repair: three plies at six inches each maximum. If cracking exceeds this amount, remove and replace entire front and second crossmembers, including pinbox. See **Replacing Crossmembers and Pin Box** procedure.

PART 2 — Reinforcing/Repairing Upper Chassis

1. Realign tubes and pinbox. The front crossmember must be straight for the formed channel to fit. The pin and base plate must be square to the siderails. Weld any cracks to maintain alignment and to resecure tubing connections. These reinforcements will prevent cracks from reoccurring.
2. Place 7-ga. formed channel (Figure 3) over front crossmember. Grind any welds or other protrusions as required for good fit. Position as shown in Figure 4. Center on front crossmember and align ends with lower corners of sidewalls. Remember to leave $1\frac{1}{8}$ " for the front wall. Reroute wiring as required to protect from heat. Drill holes and/or extend if necessary to complete circuits after assembly. Weld formed channel as shown in Figure 5.

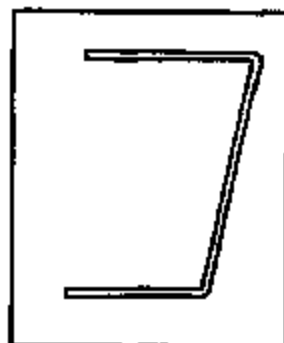


Figure 3

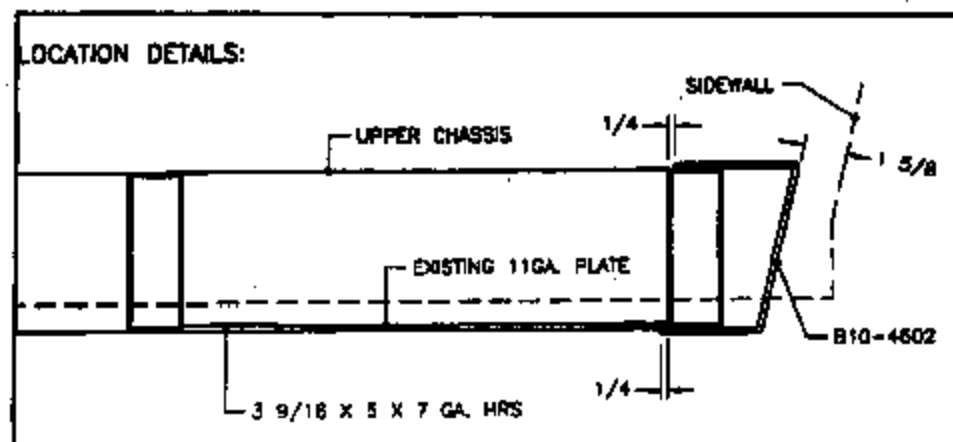


Figure 4

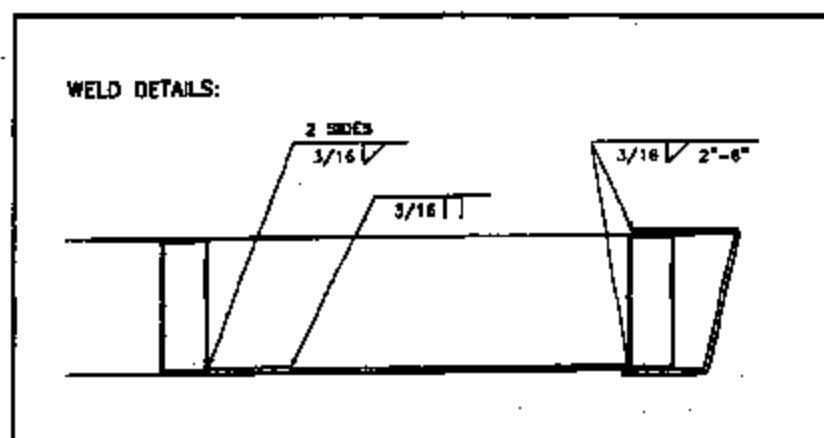
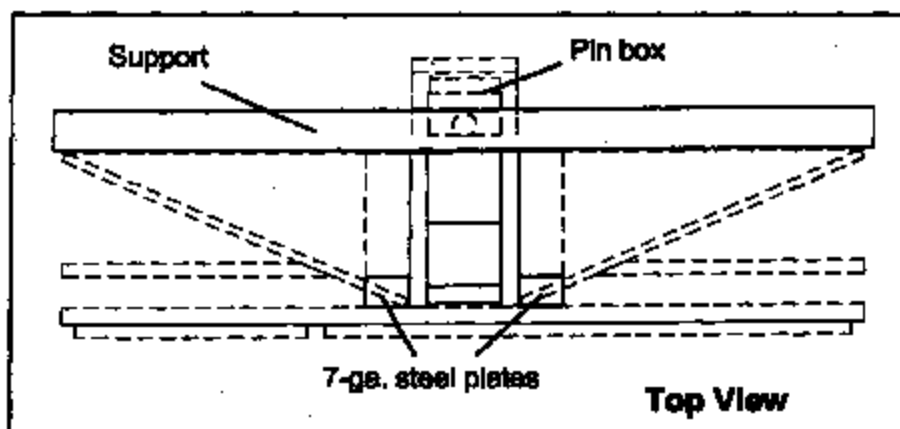


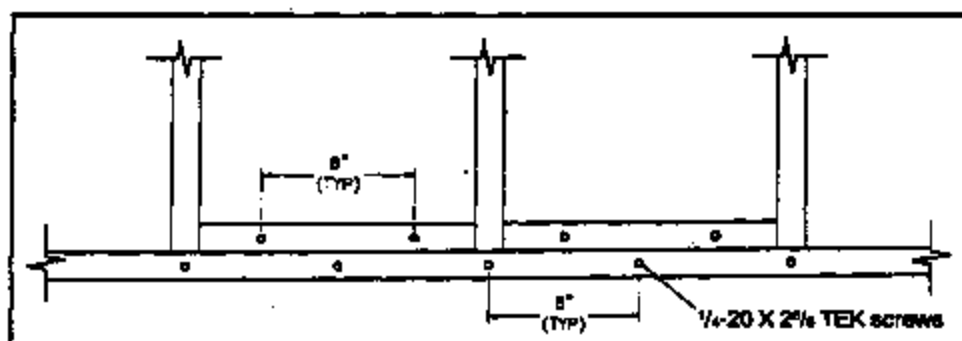
Figure 5

3. Place insulating blanket between lower front cap and second crossmember. Remove two inches from ends of diagonal 1" X 1" tubes where they meet the second crossmember. This will improve access for next step.
4. Weld $3\frac{9}{16}$ " X 5" X 7-ga. HRS plates as shown in Figures 5 & 6. Weld previously cut ends of 1" X 1" tube to these plates.

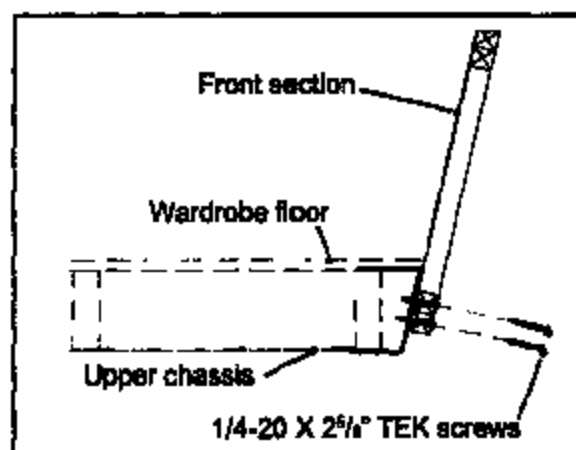
5. Prepare and paint all bare steel and allow to dry.
6. Replace the wardrobe floor. Fasten to crossmembers with #10 X 1 1/2" TEK screws every 12 inches. Predrill 3/32" at the front crossmember if required to ease installation.

**Figure 6**

7. Place a double 3/8" bead of urethane sealant adhesive (SIKA 221 or equivalent) on the front face of the formed channel reinforcement.
8. Replace lower front wall that was reinforced in Part 1, Step 4 and fasten with 1/4-20 X 2 5/8" TEK screws (Figures 7 & 8). Predrill with #5 or 13/64" drill bit. Place a 1/4" bead of SIKA on wall framing and overlay with 23" X 95 1/2" X 2.7 mm lauan panel. Staple panel in place.

**Figure 7**

9. Reconnect wiring. Be sure to protect wiring from sharp edges. Replace front cap, moldings, breakaway switch, etc. Rivet with 3/16" countersunk rivet, Arctic White. Seal all side and top moldings with acrylic latex sealant. Seal roof molding at rubber roof side with Alpha Self-leveling roof sealant.

**Figure 8**

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS REPAIR

Use Flat Rate Code and Warranty Labor Allowance as follows:

Expose, inspect, reinforce and repair upper chassis	20.0 hrs.	9068-
Replace crossmembers and pin box	35.0 hrs.	9069-

For this recall, add the correct suffix for each repair operation as follows:

- 11 Unit inspected, found not to be defective
- 12 Unit inspected, found defective, repaired
- 13 Unit inspected, found defective, owner declined repairs
- 14 Unit inspected, found defective, missing parts
- 15 Unit inspected, found defective, need tools to fix
- 16 Unable to notify customer
- 17 Customer unreachable